

ACCESS LETTER

Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Mentoring Relationships: A Way to Move Ahead

On Wednesday, October 17, the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities will present *Mentoring: A Bridge to Opportunity*. This event will focus on mentor relationships as a means of connecting employers with future workers. It will highlight ways that mentoring has advanced the lives of people with disabilities, particularly in the universe of work and careers. It will also show how people with disabilities can be mentors or find a mentor.

We can all think of a point in our lives when an important effort needed to be made, a goal reached. New ventures and transitions are difficult to accomplish alone, and for most of us, there has been someone there for support - a teacher, a coach, a Scout leader, a colleague, a trusted friend. Who made the journey alongside you, provided guidance, and made the difference at some important crossroad? Was it someone whom you found by chance, or someone in a more formal role? Was the person a mentor to you?

Mentoring is an intentional process of guidance and support that is provided by one person to another individual or a group for the benefit of the recipient(s). The recipient is sometimes referred to as the "mentee." Mentoring can take place informally, arising out of personal situations and relationships, or it can be conducted formally by trained guides such as coaches, teachers, team leaders or, yes, formal mentors. Friends, family members, peers and colleagues may share resources and have mutually supportive relationships, but these are not the same as mentoring relationships.

Formal mentoring is provided by various organizations, or within schools or businesses. Often the mentors work in a specific setting such as a business, or with a specific population, such as teenagers. Some organizations are dedicated to mentoring people who are in training for particular occupations. Many businesses provide formal mentoring to new employees or to employees who are seeking advancement.

Mentoring: A Bridge to Opportunity is our way of celebrating October as "National Disability Employment Awareness Month" and offering some resources, information and networking possibilities to local employers, educators, families and individuals with disabilities. This annual event is free and open to the public. Light refreshments and live music will sustain all who attend. This year, Oz Mondejar, Diversity Specialist for the Social Security Administration and Co-chair of the Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, will be our keynote speaker. He will be joined by a panel that will share their experiences as mentors and mentees.

Mentoring: A Bridge to Opportunity
Wednesday, October 17, 2001
5 - 7:30 p.m.

Cambridge Senior Center
806 Massachusetts Avenue
(across from City Hall)
wheelchair accessible
sign language interpreters provided
Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities
617-349-4692 v or 617-492-0235 tty
cthompson@ci.cambridge.ma.us

October Is Also White Cane Month

This month is busy with disability and access issues. Besides the focus on employment, October has also been designated "White Cane Month." While many people who are legally blind have enough residual vision to move around outdoors without much extra help, some use either a white cane or a dog guide for assistance. A white cane signifies that the person using it is blind or has a visual impairment.

There are different types of canes and various ways to use them. A person may use a long, slender cane that she sweeps from side to side in front of her as she walks to detect obstacles, changes in the surface or drop-offs. Another person may just carry the long cane close to his body ready to use when he needs to locate a particular landmark like a doorway or bus stop shelter. These canes often fold up for storage when not in use. Someone else who needs a cane for support as he walks may have a vision impairment too, so his short, sturdy orthopedic cane may also be white.

Other people with limited vision or blindness find that a professional dog guide offers the most reliable assistance. When these highly trained animals are working they will wear a harness with a rigid handle for their owner to hold. When the dog guide is in harness it is working and should not be distracted from its job. Never pet or feed a guide dog that is in harness.

Guidelines for motorists when they see a pedestrian with a white cane or dog guide:

- Come to a complete STOP when a blind pedestrian with a cane or dog guide is crossing or attempting to cross the street.
- Come to a full STOP at crosswalks.
- Do not stop in the middle of a crosswalk.
- Come to a full STOP and looking for pedestrians, before turning right on red.
- Do not pass another car that has stopped to allow pedestrians to cross the street.

Upcoming Events of Interest to the Disability Community

Oct. 3

Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) Drop-in group (information & support) on first Wednesday of each month, 6-8 p.m. at Barnes & Noble Bookstore, 5th floor conference room, Kenmore Square in Boston. Call 617-247-6827 for information.

Oct. 3

Women Maximizing Abilities Now, peer support group for women with physical or emotional disabilities and/or chronic conditions meets at The Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St., Cambridge, 2–3:30 p.m. on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. Wheelchair accessible; contact Mary Quinn at 617-354-8807 or woman@braintrust.org for more information.

Oct 5

Genetics and Bioethics: Concerns for the Disability Community conference at Courtyard Marriott, 17 Constitution Avenue in Concord, NH, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. (call 603-225-0303 for directions). Featured panelists include Peter Singer - Professor of Bioethics at Princeton University, Andrienne Asch - Professor of Biology, Ethics and the Politics of Human Reproduction at Wellesley, Paul Steven Miller - Commissioner of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, John Kemp - attorney, businessman and disability advocate, and several NH state officials. \$30 registration fee covers lunch and breaks; fax to 603-271-2837. More information and registration form are available from the New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Disability, 603-271-2774 voice/TTY or e-mail Michael Jenkins at mjenkins@gov.state.nh.us.

Oct. 16

Disability Policy Consortium (DPC) monthly meeting, 1 - 3 p.m. at the State House (Annex), Boston. For more information call Robert Snierson, Chair, at 617-338-6665 voice / 338-6662 TTY or Juanda Shaw at 617-357-5772 voice.

Oct. 17

Women Maximizing Abilities Now, peer support group at for women with disabilities / chronic conditions at 2 p.m. See Oct 3rd listing for details.

Oct 17

Deadline to Register to VOTE in Cambridge Municipal Election on Nov. 6

Oct 17

Mentoring: A Bridge to Opportunity - Annual Employment and Disability Event sponsored by Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities, 5:00 - 7:30 p.m. at the Cambridge Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Ave across the street from City Hall in Central Square. Come for light refreshments at 5:00; Keynote speaker and panel from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Oct 18

LD/AD/HD Advocacy Group for persons with Learning Disabilities/ Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder is sponsored by Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC) and meets at MRC Somerville Area Office at 5 Middlesex Ave, in Somerville, generally on the 3rd Thursday of each month. Task force meets 12 - 2:15 p.m. and support group meets 2:15-3:15 p.m. For more information contact Linn Morrill at Linn.Morrill@MRC.state.ma.us or 617-204-3723, or Angelica Sawyer at 617-661-3117 voice or 617-497-5257 Fax.

Oct 24

Access Advisory Committee for the MBTA 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. at State Transportation Building, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, 2nd floor Conference Rooms 2-3. Call 617-973-7507 voice /617-973-7089 TTY for more information or to request interpreters. Having problems with your RIDE service? Call 617-222-5123 voice, or 617-222-5415 TTY.

Nov 6

Cambridge Municipal Elections. Polls open 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Nov 6

Architectural Access Board Public Hearing on Proposed Changes to Rules and Regulations, at One Ashburton Place, 21st floor, Boston beginning at 10 a.m. Copies of the proposed changes are available at the Board office at One Ashburton, Room 1310, on the MAAB web site at www.state.ma.us/aab or by calling 617-727-0660 or 800-828-7222 v/tty. Available in alternative formats on request.

Nov 8

CCPD Monthly Meeting - 51 Inman Street, 2nd floor conference room, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. with opportunity for public comment.

Nov 11

Child and Adolescent Mental Health: Solutions for the Future - a forum sponsored by the Cambridge chapter of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI). Program includes keynote address by Marylou Sudders, Commissioner of Mass. Department of Mental Health, followed by a panel and time for questions. Begins at 7 p.m., Arlington Town Hall, 730 Massachusetts Ave. in Arlington. For more information call NAMI-Mass. at 781-938-4048 or Cambridge 781-729-5068.

Nov 15-16

Community Access Monitor Training in Cambridge, MA ([NOTE CHANGE OF DATE AND PLACE](#)) at Windsor Street Community and Health Center, 119 Windsor Street will be hosted by our own Commission for Persons with Disabilities. This two-day (9 am - 4:30 p.m.) workshop presented by the Massachusetts Office on Disability (MOD) covers regulations of the Mass. Architectural Access Board (MAAB), the ADA Standards for Accessible Design and hands-on practice taking measurements during site surveys. Fee is \$15 for consumers, \$75 for professionals; lunch is included both days. Registration DEADLINE is November 1st if you are requesting accommodations (large print, Braille, sign language interpreters); otherwise it is 1 week. For more information, contact MOD at 617-727-7440 voice/TTY or 800-322-2020 voice/TTY. This is a scent free event; please do NOT wear perfume, after-shave, cologne, etc. This Training will also be available in Abington, MA on Oct. 24-25

Nov 16

Career Fair 2001 - Reach Higher and Hire, a job fair for people with disabilities held in conjunction with Abilities EXPO at the Bayside Exposition Center, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday. Sponsored by Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission; for more information contact Karen Beth Mael at 617-739-9080 or Karen.mael@mrc.state.ma.us.

Nov 16-18

Abilities EXPO [RESCHEDULED](#) - a showcase of independent and assisted living products and services at the Bayside Exposition Center in Boston. See, test, and compare everything from computers to athletic equipment to daily living and mobility aids. Check web site for future details: www.abilitiesexpo.com

Nov. 17

Environmental Issues and Learning Disabilities, conference in Boston at Children's Hospital, 300 Longwood Avenue, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Sponsored jointly by Boston U. School of Medicine and Learning Disabilities Association of Mass. \$75 registration fee; continuing medical education credits available.

Information and on-line registration available at www.ldam.org or call 781-891-5009 for brochure.

Nov. 18

Beyond the Ramp: Creating Mental Health Links in the Jewish Community, 12-5:30 p.m. at Leventhal-Sidman Jewish Community Center, Newton, MA. Sponsored by Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston. For more information contact Judy Pearl, Director of Special Needs Services, Jewish Community Centers of Greater Boston, at 617-558-6508 v/617-965-5175 TTY or jpearl@jccgb.org.

Access Notice

The City of Cambridge does not discriminate on the basis of disability. This newsletter is available in electronic mail, large print and other alternative formats upon request. To add your name to our mailing list, to inquire about alternative formats, or for information about other auxiliary aids and services or reasonable modifications in policies and procedures, contact CCPD.

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